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## MEMOIR OF THOMAS FURLONG.

Thomas Furlong, the translator of Carolan's remains, and other ancient relics, was born in the county of Wexford—a portion of Ireland which has also given birth to Thomas Moore. Furlong's father was a respectable farmer. Our poet was born in the year 1794, at a place called Scarawalsh, a romantic part of the country, midway between Ferns and Enniscorthy. His education qualified him for a Counting-house, and, at fourteen, he was apprenticed to a respectable trader in the Irish Metropolis. The ledger, however, had less attraction for him than the muses; yet though he "lisp'd in numbers," he did not let his passion for poetry interfere with his more important duties. This is a feature in his character which should not be overlooked. Through life he retained the friendship of his employer; and when that gentleman died, Furlong vented his feelings in a poem, which, though it is one of his earliest productions, has the following impressive stanzas:

"Oh! if the Atheist's words were true,  
If those we seek to save,  
Sink—and in sinking from our view  
Are lost beyond the grave!  
If life thus closed—how dark and drear,  
Would this bewildered earth appear,  
Scarce worth the dust it gave.  
A tract of black sepulchral gloom,  
One yawning, ever-opening tomb.

"Blest be that strain of high belief,  
More heaven-like, more sublime,  
Which says that souls that part in grief,  
Part only for a time!  
That far beyond this speck of pain,  
Far o'er the gloomy wave's domain,  
There spreads a brighter clime,  
Where care and toil and trouble o'er,  
Friends meet—and meeting, weep no more."

These are the breathings of a poet, who though he did not excite a wonderful degree of attention during his lifetime, was yet possessed of all the qualifications of genius.

Mr. Furlong certainly escaped much of the miseries of a poet's life. He either had more common sense, or Providence better guided him—for his career, though short, does not exhibit any of those wild and wayward vagaries which at one and the same time, interest and pain us in reading the lives of some of the children of song. During the most valuable part of his life, he was in the employment of Mr. Jamieson, an eminent distiller of Dublin—a man of enlarged and liberal views—and it reflects great credit both on the poet and his employer, that Mr. Jamieson wept like a child on the day of Furlong's funeral.

Our poet was a large contributor to the *New Monthly Magazine*, and he projected, in 1822, the *New Irish Magazine*, which was printed in Dublin. During the years 1825 and 1826, he was employed occasionally in writing the *Doom of Derenzie*, a descriptive poem which was published, after his death, by Robins, of London. This poem was warmly eulogized by his friend, the late Rev. CHARLES MATURIN, with whom he had long been on habits of the closest intimacy. The following letter is a proof of the intimacy, and is interesting, as being written a short time before the death of the eccentric and talented Maturin.

"Wednesday.—I trust the melancholy circumstance of my poor father's death will excuse my not writing to you lately. I am confined with an inflammation in my eyes, for which I am undergoing a severe mercurial course; but if you can have the charity to sit with a blind invalid, come and drink tea with me this evening, from seven till ten. Bring your poem with you. I write this with great difficulty. You see I have some chance of fame in being ranked with 'Blind Thamyris and blind Mæonides,' though I confess it is the last particular in which I wish to resemble those worthies.

Faithfully yours,

C. R. MATURIN."

Such was the friendship and intercourse between the author of "Bertram, "Women, or Pour et Contre," "Melmoth," &c. and the translator of Carolan—for it is in this light we wish to regard Furlong. Yet when his aid was first solicited, (as Mr. Hardiman tells us in his *Irish Minstrelsy*), to undertake the translation, he at first smiled at the idea of finding any thing of merit extant in the Irish language. But inspection convinced him that he was labouring under the common prejudice of the day; and his fine taste soon appreciated the

worth of those old relics. Since we commenced this Journal more than one individual has called at the office, complaining that the translation given in the first number was very incorrect. We laboured to convince them that it was a poetic translation—in fact it ought to have been stated that it was translated by Furlong. But nothing would satisfy our worthy friends—who, being intimate with the Irish language, and but imperfectly acquainted with English, could not appreciate the meaning of a poetic translation, and insisted on a literal one. Furlong in his translations, endeavoured to enter into the spirit of the bard, and to express himself in English as he conceived the writer would have done, had he been acquainted with that language.

Mr. Furlong died in the year 1827, in the thirty-third year of his age. He thus did not live long enough for the expansion of his powers, or the maturing of his intellect; but he has left behind him proof sufficient that he was a poet of no mean order. He was interred in the church-yard of Drumcondra, near Dublin, and over his grave, which lies near that of the celebrated antiquarian Grose, his friends have erected a handsome monument, with the following inscription:—

TO THE MEMORY OF  
THOMAS FURLONG, Esq.  
in whom the purest principles of  
Patriotism and Honor  
were combined with  
Superior Poetical Genius,  
This Memorial of Friendship,  
is erected by those who valued and admired  
His various Talents, Public Integrity,  
And Private Worth.  
He died 25th July, 1827, aged 33 years.  
MAY HE REST IN PEACE.

The following lines were the last which issued from the pen of Mr. Furlong, written a few days before his death:—

## THE SPIRIT OF IRISH SONG.

Lov'd land of the Bards and Saints! to me  
There's nought so dear as thy minstrelsy:  
Bright is nature in every dress,  
Rich in unborrow'd loveliness;  
Winning is every shape she wears,  
Winning she is in thine own sweet airs;  
What to the spirit more cheering can be  
Than the lay whose ling'ring notes recal  
The thoughts of the holy—the fair—the free,  
Belov'd in life or deplor'd in their fall?  
Fling, fling the forms of art aside,  
Dull is the ear that these forms enthal;  
Let the simple songs of our sires be tried,  
They go to the heart—and the heart is all.  
Give me the full responsive sigh,  
The glowing cheek and the moisten'd eye;  
Let these the minstrel might attest,  
And the vain and the idle—may share the rest.

## WANT OF POINT, A NICE POINT.

An ingenious expedient was devised to save a prisoner charged with robbery, in the Criminal Court at Dublin. The principal thing that appeared in evidence against him was a confession alleged to have been made by him at the police office. The document purporting to contain this self-criminating acknowledgment, was produced by the officer, and the following passage was read from it.

"Mangan said he never robbed but twice  
Said it was Crawford."

This it will be observed has no mark of the writer's having any notion of punctuation, but the meaning he attached to it was that

"Mangan said he never robbed but twice:  
Said it was Crawford."

Mr. O'Gorman, the counsel for the prisoner, begged to look at the paper. He perused it, and rather astonished the peace officer by asserting, that so far from its proving the man's guilt it established his innocence. "This," said the learned gentleman, "is the fair and obvious reading of the sentence:

"Mangan said he never robbed;  
But twice said it was Crawford."

This interpretation had its effect on the jury, and the man was acquitted.